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## ETHICS OF THE STATE.

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ETHICAL law is universal. It pertains to every conscious, voluntary act of every free intelligence throughout the universe. Herbart has rightly contended that "the ethical appertains to self-active beings only." But every free intelligence is self-active and therefore ethically responsible.

Ethical law is immutable. It changes not to suit the convenience, ignorance, or caprice of its subjects. And yet its subjects may change. Indeed they must change. In a real and important sense Mr. Kidd is right when he says: "The moral law is the unchanging law of progress in human society." The law is immutable, but society, to which it pertains, being progressive, is of necessity mutable.

Ethical law is inexorable. Its demands cannot be avoided nor its penalties escaped. Lord Bacon's famous dictum that "ignorance of the cause deprives us of the effect" may be true in physics, but in ethics no amount of ignorance can ever rob righteousness of its reward or release iniquity from its penalty. A free intelligence may, indeed, cherish a certain conviction, indulge a certain feeling, perform a certain act, until to him it becomes habitual, automatic, morally indifferent. But the deed itself is not morally indifferent, and no number of repetitions can ever vacate its ethical quality. The law is simply inexorable, independent of human thought or deed.

Furthermore, ethical law applies to every possible combination of free intelligences. The popular aphorism "Corporations have no soul" is a mere ethical fiction. Every corporation is the aggregate soul of the men composing it. Corporate acts not infrequently discount the reputed ethical valuation of the individual souls concerned therein. But such discount is always in

the interest of truth. You can never make a dishonest corporation out of honest men.

The same principle applies to society, the community, the state. There is one immutable law that governs the individual, the corporation, the body politic. If two moral agents combine to execute a purpose which neither could accomplish alone, there is manifestly no power in such combination to free either the agents or their act from the responsibility of moral agency. And if such combination include a hundred, a thousand, or a million such agents, moral responsibility is neither shifted nor lessened thereby. Mere arithmetic cannot affect the moral quality of an act or a system of acts.

If these definitive statements be correct it is evident that there is such a thing as "ethics of the state."

The state may be briefly defined as "organized society exercising sovereignty over its members." Government is the agent of the state, whereby its will is announced, its sovereignty enforced. By "organized society" I do not mean a literal organic unit. Herbert Spencer is somewhat extreme on this point, contending that "the fundamental principles of organization are the same for individual organism as for social organism—being mutual dependence of parts." Professor Patten has rightly criticised this conception of society. In case of the individual the several parts depend upon the same vital force and the same will, which secures their interaction and reciprocal function, while in the case of society they depend simply upon similar environment, which is powerless to give such security. It is by disregarding this distinction that Mr. Spencer treats society as a literal organic unit, worships individualism, proposes land nationalization, and in the expressive words of a recent critic "elects to turn his back upon the rising sun and so remains where he was fifty years ago"—among exploded social problems.

Let it be distinctly understood, then, that when the state is spoken of as an organic unit it is not meant thereby to deprive its constituent members of their autonomy or their moral responsibility. With this understanding the definitions given

above may be taken as sufficiently accurate for the present purpose.

Viewing the state then as organized society, we must concede its dependence upon moral law. It is so dependent for its very existence. The individual may exist on principles of simple self-interest. But the social compact requires upon the part of all its members such constant sacrifice of individual interests to the general good that nothing short of moral principle will secure the needed sacrifice. Moreover, there is a certain ethical altruism without which the state can make no progress. The reasons are not far to seek. Intellectual progress is by the nature of the case exclusive, while the moral law is inclusive. Only a few citizens can respond to the appeals of science, but the many may respond to those of moral law. And then this intellectual minority by some curious law of heredity tends to diminish and run out. Take two young men of the same age, one with intellectual aspirations, the other without. The latter will marry at twenty-one years; the former will spend ten years in self-improvement and then marry at thirty-one. A recent writer has calculated that upon moderate estimates, from this difference alone, the progeny of the ignoramus will in three centuries become fifteen times as numerous as those of the literatus. Be this as it may, the relative sterility of the upper classes in all civilizations has become notorious. In India the high caste Brahmins have dwindled to a few thousands, while the lower castes are numbered by millions. Even in London the so-called upper and middle classes combined include but 16 per cent. of the population, while those in abject ignorance and poverty are more than twice as numerous. Manifestly we cannot depend entirely or even largely upon the intelligent few (Matthew Arnold to the contrary notwithstanding) for the regeneration of society and the perfection of the state. The state is to be improved mainly by improving the average citizen. And the average citizen is to be improved mainly by an appeal to ethical law, reinforced by spiritual truth and religious sentiment.

It is therefore of utmost importance to bear constantly in

mind the ethical aspects of society and the state. There is always danger lest that organic entity we call the state be regarded as an impersonal entity and its acts as devoid of moral significance. Our best citizens seem quite as prone as others to this error. Even preachers are not exempt from it. How seldom do we hear sermons on themes like these: "The moral value and responsibility of the state," "Its available improvement and possible perfection," "The rights and duties of government," "The religious obligations of citizenship," "The ethical responsibility of society for the social character of its members," and the like! It is manifest that such themes are of value to the citizen, the state, and the church, that they are recognized in the gospel, and that they ought to be recognized, occasionally at least, in the ministrations of the gospel.

Questions of state ethics may be loosely divided into two classes: duties of citizens to the state, and duties of the state to its citizens.

I. What are the duties of the citizen to his state?

1. He ought to love his state. This duty is fundamental and in a sense includes every other. Patriotism is a well-worn theme and yet one cannot easily define it. Janet makes it to include love of country, soil, kindred, laws, institutions, and I know not what beside. It has two principal forms, the martial or conservative and the civic or constructive.

(1) Martial patriotism is first in time but second in rank. Its function is to defend the state in times of danger. In the early history of all nations these times of danger have been frequent and trying. In such emergencies it is certainly a noble thing to risk one's own life for the life of his state. This spirit may degenerate, however, into the mere love of fighting and then it becomes brutal. The history of mediæval Europe is marred with much of this martial brutality. Mr. Ruskin's exhortation to British soldiers to follow their profession for the love of it is a thing of questionable propriety. It has a certain flavor of mediæval barbarity about it. And that was almost a ludicrous illustration of this tendency furnished by a British regiment which, in time of the late Franco-Prussian war, with true

martial zeal begged the privilege of fighting in that war, but when asked upon which side they desired to fight, replied that they had not considered that matter—the regimental officers could decide that. As civilization advances this form of martial patriotism recedes. I assign two reasons for it.

(a) It is not so much needed. In a state of barbarism, might makes right. In a state of perfect civilization, right makes might. Now, as nations advance from the former to the latter of these conditions, the tendency to oppression and tyranny subsides, and the fighting patriot disappears, or ought to disappear, from the land. The present spectacle in peaceful Europe of four millions of men retained in standing armies, whence the last vestige of active patriotism has fled, and where the countrymen of Cæsar, Napoleon, and Wellington have nothing left to do but grow lazy and immoral, while their women at home are bearing burdens of toil and hardship which the men ought to bear, is a pitiable travesty on civilization, a standing disgrace to humanity. If these great armies, now admittedly useless save as a menace to one another, were at once disbanded, the probability of individual invasion or of a general European war would be immensely diminished thereby. Advancing virtue is the best national guard. Sir John Lubbock rightly says: "Ideas are more powerful than bayonets."

(b) But again, this martial form of patriotism is receding before the advancing spirit of general philanthropy. As modern inventions annihilate space and bring even the remotest nations into the same circles of mutual acquaintance, commercial interest and friendship, the national horizon of the average citizen becomes immeasurably widened. He loves his own nation none the less, but he loves others all the more, and is increasingly averse to taking arms against them. He is still a citizen of his own state, but he is likewise a denizen of the world, a member of humanity, and his sympathies are now as broad as the race itself.

(2) Civic patriotism is of slower growth than the form just mentioned, but is superior in character and abiding in value. I have called it constructive patriotism, because its primary pur-

pose is, not to preserve the life of the state, but to improve the character of the state, to build it up in justice, virtue, and moral power. Men fight to preserve the state, not to improve it. If "revolutions never go backward," revolutionists seldom go forward. Progressive results are incidental, existing beforehand in the mind of Providence, no doubt, but not in the minds of those who fight. In 1861 if there was here and there a single soldier who fought for a great moral idea—the abolition of African slavery—there were ten soldiers at his side who were fighting merely to preserve the Union. Now that the Union is preserved, it is the mission of true patriotism to perform the greater work of up-building the state in righteousness and justice, increasing the efficiency of government, enacting and executing just laws, removing all manner of bribery and corruption, and securing to every citizen absolute equality of right, in fact as well as in form. For the exercise of this civic patriotism there will always be ample opportunity.

2. The second duty of the citizen is to obey the state. There are three possible cases :

(1) Where a law is believed to be wise and good. In this case exact and prompt obedience is the manifest duty of the citizen, no matter how burdensome it may be to himself personally.

(2) Where a law is believed to be unwise. In this case I still contend that the citizen is to obey. Of course, a law really unwise will ultimately work injury to the state, and ought to be repealed. But the individual citizen, not being gifted with infallibility, cannot certainly decide as to the unwisdom of a law. The only real test of a given law is to be found in strictly obeying it. And I ought to coöperate with my fellow-citizens in furnishing this needful test. If thereupon the law is found to work well, I must withdraw my objections, at whatever cost of personal or party pride. If it works ill, the chances are that my fellow-citizens, observing its evil tendencies, will join me in its destruction. But if not I must wait patiently and serenely till some further illumination shall come to the darkened minds of my countrymen.

(3) The third case is that of an iniquitous law. Ought the citizen to obey a law of the state which he believes to be morally wrong? The time-honored answer to this question is an affirmative. Under Roman jurisprudence, the citizen gave to the state his first allegiance. The universal worship of "divus imperator" meant a universal yielding of individual conscience to the state. Such political philosophers as Hobbes and Bentham have, in recent years, virtually insisted upon the same thing.

Now, this question involves a larger one, namely, Must a free moral intelligence always obey his own conscience? If he does, it will inevitably lead him astray. If he does not, he rejects his only possible moral guide, abdicates his manhood and becomes a thing instead of a man. My answer is, that he must obey conscience in every case. If, in a given instance, he is led astray thereby, then his guilt attaches to some previous defection from duty, and not to his present loyalty to conscience.

If this general principle of ethics be correct, then a negative answer must be returned to the question before us. The citizen must not obey a wicked law. In determining its moral character, he should seek all possible personal enlightenment, but the final decision must be his own. The state cannot keep his conscience for him. If he disobey the law, however, he should not seek to avoid its penalty. Let him stand up like a man, and take the full consequences of his disobedience. He is thus a law-abiding citizen, vindicating his own loyalty and condemning the law that he breaks.

3. A third duty of the citizen is to support the state. There are two kinds of support to be rendered, material and moral support. A state without money is like a sail without wind, an engine without steam. But the state has no resources of its own apart from those of its citizens. It exists simply for their benefit. It performs certain indispensable services in their behalf, for which an equivalent should be cheerfully rendered, at least in so far as may be necessary for the support of the state. To evade a just tax is to rob the state of that material support which is due from every citizen.



But besides this there is a certain moral support due to the state. This may be rendered in two ways, negatively and positively. We are told not to speak evil of dignitaries. This is good religion and good politics as well. Would that the modern American might heed the admonition. Any course that tends to weaken the general respect for law and the agents of its execution is calamitous, if not indeed criminal. Mr. Debs has furnished the country a forcible illustration of this danger. But positively the citizen should give to the state and to its agents who stand for the majesty of law the moral support of his personal approval. I know a pastor in Ohio who recently lost his place for upholding righteous law against a mob. I glory in that pastor and blush for his church.

4. Another duty of the citizen is to coöperate with the state. Every man ought to be an active politician. Manifestly there must be division of labor in politics as elsewhere, but what citizen has a right to shirk all political labor? Verily not one. It is easy enough to lift one's hands in holy horror and cry out against the wicked politicians. But citizens so doing should remember that by this very disgust they are at least modestly admitting their own superiority over those citizens who, in the aggregate, control the policy of the state. But if they are thus superior, then their own duty to the state is by so much the greater than that of those whom they criticise. When therefore they withdraw from all political action they are, in the expressive language of another, virtually "turning the country over to the devil," in so far as their own conduct can contribute to this direful result. They become disciples of Professor Huxley, who intimated that if there is to be no radical improvement in society he would "hail the advent of some kindly comet which would sweep the whole affair away." And yet, from his vantage ground of superior knowledge and character, he proffered no aid whereby such radical improvement might be wrought. The citizen may coöperate with the state:

(1) By voting. This duty is too obvious to need mention. There is more implied in it than we often think. The mere casting of a ballot is a small matter, albeit many of our good citizens

forget to do even that. But the proper preparation for intelligent and effective voting is not so small a matter.

(2) By affiliating with a political party. Whatever may be truthfully said against partisan politics, it still remains that under any form of popular government the existence of at least two powerful political parties is an absolute necessity. There must be one party to furnish the office holders, and another to watch them—one to dictate governmental policy, and another to criticise it. This latter function is quite as needful as the former.

(3) A third method of coöperating with the state is by accepting office. Office seeking is by no means reprehensible. And yet if office holding were universally regarded as a duty to be performed rather than as a reward to be sought it would be far better, both for the state and for the office holders themselves. Virginians have always viewed the matter somewhat in this light. At least they have made it a point of honor to accept any office, however low, to which their fellow citizens might call them. And it is a beautiful thing to see an ex-President of the United States acting as road overseer in his district, simply because he is called to this humble office and deems it his political duty thus to serve his fellow citizens.

(4) I mention one more method in which the citizen may coöperate with the state. It is by joining privately and unofficially with other citizens of the state. This I deem the most important method of all.

Other methods have their serious limitations and drawbacks. When all possible precautions have been taken one must still often vote in the dark, if he votes at all. Primaries and political conventions have a perverse habit of going wrong. Office holding has its peculiar difficulties. In the first place, only a very few of the citizens can ever hold office. In the second place, many of the offices are financially not worth holding. In the third place, nomination for office is treated as a proper reward for party service, and he gets it, not who is best fitted for it, but who best pleases the party leaders. And, in the fourth place, that experience of petty office holding, in constant

expectancy of something better, which usually precedes political advancement tends to make a man subservient, to rob him of his independent manhood, and to render his whole happiness in life dependent upon securing an office, for which he is tempted to barter time, health, family, comfort, integrity, virtue, honor, all.

For such reasons it seems certain that the average citizen can best serve his state, not as an office holder or a political partisan with old scores to settle and old obligations to meet, but as an independent private citizen, with hand unfettered and tongue untied. Let such citizens associate themselves in the interest of some special cause that has merit in it. Let them gather and digest the facts pertinent thereto. Let them know definitely what they want and persist in demanding it, and eventually the politicians must yield. This is the history of political reform in this and other lands. The abolition of slavery after long years of agitation by private citizens, the civil-service reform law enacted after ten years of party rejection, the interstate commerce law, the ballot act and election laws adopted by Massachusetts and other states, the defeat of the Tweed ring and later of the Tammany ring in New York City, and the late political reforms in Chicago and elsewhere are familiar examples in the recent history of reform in this country.

Students of European history need not be reminded that political reforms there have never emanated from the throne. In this country it is equally true that politicians never inaugurate reforms. It is for the personal interest of office holders here, as of monarchs there, to maintain things as they are. It is not the man who is in that wants a change, but the man who is out. But the true patriot, whether in or out, will merge personal interests in the welfare of the state. The best citizen is he who recognizes most keenly and comprehensively his moral relations. The strongest bond that binds the citizen to his state is not social or political, but ethical.

II. Having briefly referred to the duties of citizens, I now come to the duties of the state itself. In order to consider them more intelligently, it is well to remind ourselves of the nature

and the rights of the state. Reverting to our definition, "A state is an organized society exercising sovereignty over its members," we note:

1. What is left out of this definition. Geography, language, race, and religion are left out. A state may defy natural boundaries, may speak many languages, may involve many races. Indeed, race lines are fading out everywhere. The German is no longer a pure Teuton, nor the Englishman an Anglo-Saxon, nor the Frenchman a Gaul. As for the American, he is rapidly becoming a cosmopolitan mixture of all bloods under the sun. Religion is likewise left out. Brahma, Gautama, Confucius, Odin, Osiris, Mohammed, the Pope, might once partition the earth and dictate state lines; they can do so no more. Some one has said of Solon that he "wrested the earth from religion and gave it to labor," evidently meaning that he began the secularization of the state—that long process which is now practically complete.

2. Note in the second place what is included in this definition. There must be society, organization, sovereignty. A lone man living in a hut on Treasure Island for seven years cannot constitute a state. Neither can unorganized savages, pirates, or gypsies constitute a state. Organized sovereignty is the essential characteristic of the state. Whenever a social compact exercises sovereignty over its members it thereupon becomes a state. Whenever it ceases so to do it thereupon ceases to be a state. Even the Spencerian philosophy, with all its ultra-individualism, believes in "the central ruling power" that protects the individual citizen.

I may now proceed to enumerate some of the duties peculiar to the state.

1. The first duty of the state is sovereignty. This is both a duty and a right, pertaining to all states alike, regardless of size, wealth, or power. And it means much.

(1) The state is sovereign over itself. By this is meant that there is no human authority back of the state whence its rights are derived, and no tribunal above the state to which its enemies may appeal. Ultimate sovereignty, of course, dwells in

God alone. But he seems to have entrusted to the state so much of it as pertains to the social order. And no human power can rightfully interfere therewith. Every act of the state is self-authorized, self-controlled, final. If mistakes occur they can be corrected only by the state itself.

(2) The state is sovereign over its own domain. And this includes all the land, the entire territory of the state. It all belongs originally to the state. Whether any or all of it shall be owned by individuals is a question to be determined by the state alone. If anyone doubts this statement, let him remember two things concerning it: (a) Every valid conveyance of land must be made with the approval of the state and duly recorded by its authority. (b) Under the principle of eminent domain, so called, the state may step in at any time and, without the consent of its owner, take possession of any land within its territory for public uses. You buy your land from your neighbor, but you take your title from the state. Moreover, you hold that title subject to the sovereign will of the state. This does not mean, of course, that rights of ownership once conceded by the state and acquired by the citizen can be violated without due compensation. Neither does it mean that they can ever be violated, save alone for the public need. I may have a right to give my son a wheel, or to refrain from giving. But having once given it on certain conditions I have no right to seize it from him in violation of those conditions. He has acquired property rights in that wheel which must be respected. This illustration must not be pushed too far. But it represents, in some sense, the actual condition of things in every civilized state on earth. Henry Georgeism, like Hegelian philosophy, might do for some ideal world somewhere, but it cannot apply to this actual world as it now is.

(3) The state is sovereign over its citizens. A man is born into society without his own consent, and cannot escape it. Aristotle said long ago: "The state exists by nature, and man is by nature a political animal." He may throw off his allegiance by removing from one state to another. But this is only to change masters. He has not escaped state sovereignty thereby.

Indeed, there is only one possible method of such escape. If he can find somewhere an unoccupied portion of the earth's surface, take personal possession thereof, and live the life of a hermit thereon, he then becomes his own sovereign. Such empty sovereignty is not worth having or mentioning. But otherwise the citizen is subject to the state from birth date to death date.

This sovereignty includes three things, the life, liberty, and property of the citizen. The state can innocently take the life of the citizen for cause. No other power can. This right the individual has yielded to organized society. He has therefore no right remaining, except in necessary self-defense, to take either his own life or that of another. The state can likewise take personal possession of the citizen for all purposes within the scope of the state's authority. Even the property of the citizen is subject to the state. I know we are apt to think otherwise. A man is supposed to be master of his own powers, and of the property he acquires by the legitimate use of those powers. And yet this is a grave mistake. You have a million dollars. You say this money is your own and you can do as you please with it. Try it and see. Put it into useful buildings on a college campus, and it is not likely that anyone will interfere with your property rights. But try it in another way. Put it into an immense powder mill or asafetida shop, just on the border of the same campus, and you will soon find whether the state has any authority over your property.

A just state will never exercise authority over the citizen or his possessions in any arbitrary or unjust way. Professor Huxley rightly contended that government should restrain such individuality as is inconsistent with society, while it encourages such as tends to social evolution.

2. The second duty of the state is to protect its citizens. It is for the purpose of protection that the state exists. At least this is its chief purpose. But for this purpose, it need exercise no sovereignty either over itself or over its subjects. No man can protect himself or secure his own rights. Relentless forces of nature, savage beasts and more savage men, are con-

tinually resisting him and defeating his strongest efforts. He finds a universal struggle for existence, and that constant competition which Spencer has piquantly called "commercial cannibalism." He is subject to complicated conditions and forces over which he has, and can have, no control. Manifestly he needs a stronger arm than his own to hold these forces in proper adjustment, and to secure the free action of his own powers. Such a protecting arm it is the office of the state to furnish. This protection is threefold, that of person, of property, and of honor.

3. A third duty of the state is to secure the improvement of its citizens. This duty is necessarily somewhat indefinite. And yet the public welfare is to be sought by the state quite as much as the public safety. Mill says: "A government is to be judged by its tendency to improve the people." And it is evidently the duty of the state to adopt and maintain that form of government which is best adapted to improve the citizens. A careful distinction must be made here. The state can seek the improvement of its citizens as citizens only, and not at all as individual personalities. With their private personal character it can have nothing to do. Improvement therein must come incidentally if at all. In other words, the state has a perfect right to make me a good citizen if it can, but it has no right even to attempt to make me a good man. One thing the state can always do: It can teach the citizen the lesson of political altruism. It is perhaps asking too much to expect the average citizen to export himself from himself, and to think and act for the general good. Say what you will of human selfishness, most men act, and will continue to act, in their own personal interest. This is a legitimate force perhaps, but at all events a powerful one for the advancement of men. It needs, however, the constant action of a counter-tendency looking to the public good. This tendency the state ought to furnish. I quote again from Herbert Spencer who says: "From the dawn of life, egoism and altruism are increasingly dependent upon each other." The citizen and the state may supply these two elements respectively, from whose proper combination the constant progress of society is to come.

4. A fourth duty of the state is to respect the rights of its citizens. There are two classes of these rights, one which they have, hold, and exercise only in their combined capacity as a body politic, a brotherhood. Manifestly there are some things which may legitimately be done by society as a whole, and yet which no private citizen has any right to do. These things belong to the state and lie within the scope of its sovereignty. Life, liberty, and property, when forfeited by the citizen or when needed by the state, must be reckoned in this list. But there are other rights of the citizen which he has, holds, and exercises as an individual being, a private personality. These cannot be alienated by himself or accepted by the state. That is to say, the citizen has given much to the state, but he has not given his personality. You may take by force my property, my liberty, my life, but you must not touch the inner citadel of myself. That belongs to God and to me.

The state must neither transcend the limits of public right nor invade those of private right. Notice what this twofold inhibition means. In a general way it means that the state is capable of doing wrong. If it cannot do wrong, it is manifestly a mere machine and cannot do right. If it cannot abuse its rights, neither can it maintain them. The old doctrine that the king cannot err is decidedly uncomplimentary to the king. But more particularly this inhibition means that the state must exercise only its own rights, and these only in legitimate ways and for legitimate purposes. There are some things the state cannot do, some realms it must not enter. Henry George tells us, "It is not the business of government to make men virtuous, religious, or wise." So far as religion and virtue are concerned this statement is undoubtedly correct. That the state is to furnish the elements of wisdom, however, and the conditions of virtue, there can be no question. Social virtues must be encouraged and social vices repressed. With intrinsic personal virtue, the state, by the nature of the case, has nothing to do. This whole question of individual rights and state rights gives room for great differences of opinion. But there are certain basal truths which can scarcely be challenged. (1) The state is



ordained of God, and is therefore a divine institution. (2) It is so ordained for a specific purpose, namely, to determine and enforce the proper relations between man and man. (3) It is the duty of every citizen to give allegiance and obedience to the state within this its proper scope. (4) The state may rightfully do everything necessary to maintain the rightful relations among its citizens. (5) With the personal character, religious convictions, and spiritual life of the citizen the state has nothing whatever to do. (6) The state must recognize and enforce ethical law, but only that portion of it which concerns the social relations of men as inhabitants of the earth. (7) The state has a right to inquire what a man does, in so far as his deed affects the rights of other men, but has no right to inquire what a man is. (8) No man can be forced to be good, or punished for being bad. It is only as his goodness or badness affects the rights of others that it can even be called in question by the state. (9) The relations of every man to his own conscience, to God, to immortality, and to all spiritual truth cannot be yielded to the state, nor in any wise affected by the state. (10) If the state through its agent, the government, should invade any of these personal rights sacred to the private citizen, in so far as it does this it ceases to be a state and becomes a usurper whom it is both the privilege and the duty of every citizen to resist.

If these principles be correct they will go far toward settling certain vexed questions in political and social science. Some of these questions it may be proper to discuss. They are neither new nor startling, and yet honest citizens still differ concerning them. Conclusions reached herein will be stated with a degree of positiveness and a certain strength of conviction, and yet I trust not without due courtesy to opposing views, or constant hospitality to new light.

I. Should the state enact and enforce laws concerning the Sabbath? The leading facts relative to this question seem to be as follows: (1) The Sabbath is a religious institution, ordained by divine authority and regulated by divine law. Its proper observance is a question between God and the individual human conscience. (2) A rest day is a demonstrated physiological and

mental necessity. Neither man nor domestic animals can long endure the constant strain of laboring seven days in the week.

(3) This religious institution called the Sabbath is besides a rest day, and coincides in frequency of recurrence with the physiological and mental requirements of man for periodic rest. (4) It therefore constitutes a convenient rest day, should any such day be adopted by the state.

From these facts certain conclusions may be safely drawn.

1. The state has no right to enforce any observance of the Sabbath whatever. A citizen may perform his full duty to his fellow citizens as such, and still not keep the Sabbath. His dereliction of duty is purely a religious one, for which the state has no right whatever to arraign him.

2. It is both the right and the duty of the state to enforce the observance of a rest day. That is, in so far as it pertains to the relations of man to man. Possibly the state may not force me to rest, but certainly it may force me to allow my employes to rest. Even their willingness to work for me seven days in the week does not affect the case. If I should induce a hundred men to commit suicide that would be a crime justly punishable by the state. And it matters not how slow the suicide may be. Evidently the state may close up my place of business periodically if necessary to secure for its citizens the enjoyment of a proper rest day.

3. There can certainly be nothing wrong in causing this rest day of the state to coincide with this Sabbath of the church. Furthermore, if the sanctions of the Sabbath make the observance of a coincident rest day easy and that of another day difficult if not impossible, it becomes the duty of the state to make these days coincident. Of course, it follows that if for any reason Wednesday, or Saturday, or any other day of the week should obtain universal religious sanction then that new day should be designated as the rest day of the state.

4. Sabbath laws, so called, can never be justified by reason of the religious character of the day. Any laws necessary for the regulation of a rest day, regardless of all religious requirement, are certainly proper. Any others are certainly improper.

Notice, we are not now considering the question of affording legal protection to religious assemblies. That may be right on any day of the week, and for other reasons—reasons equally applicable to innocent and useful assemblies for any purpose whatever.

To some it may not seem necessary in this day of the world to insist upon these plain principles. And yet it is necessary. Virtuous, law-abiding citizens of Kentucky, Tennessee, Maryland, Georgia, Illinois, and other states have recently suffered imprisonments and other pains and penalties at the hand of the state simply because they hoed corn or did some other harmless work on Sunday. I have no words of sufficient strength with which to characterize the atrocious iniquity of such proceedings. It may be unwise for a Sabbatarian to hoe corn on Sunday, but it is infinitely worse for a magistrate to punish him for it. I hope not to be misunderstood concerning this question of Sabbath laws. I certainly believe them to be wrong as relating to the religious day called the Sabbath. As pertaining to a day of rest merely they are right and good, and the name matters not much.

But the conscientious observance of the religious day itself I most heartily approve. The general introduction of the continental Sabbath into this country would be an unspeakable misfortune. I would write the sanctions of the day, however, not on the public statute books, but in the Christian conscience of each individual citizen. Any attempt to force men by law to keep the Sabbath is, in the words of Henry George concerning another matter, to "overstrain the functions of government, and thus weaken it as you do in the animal organism."

## II. Should church property be taxed?

This old question is periodically renewed by some special event which serves to fix public attention upon it. The recent assessment of property belonging to Dr. Conwell's church in Philadelphia, and similar instances in New York and elsewhere have given the question something of current prominence.

Now concerning church and state it must be conceded that neither is the creature of the other. The church sanctions the

state by teaching its members to be subject to the powers that be, since they are ordained of God for the control of society. And the state works with the church in so far as its code of social morals is included within the moral code of the church. But beyond this their spheres of operation do not intersect. Each is ordained of God, but for a specific work not committed to the other.

From this principle it is argued that the church should do its own work, neither asking nor receiving aid from the state, and that the remission of taxes upon church property is really a contribution from the state toward the expenses of the church. Possibly so, but the contribution happens to be for state expenses instead of church expenses. Give a man a pure heart, a tender conscience, and an upright personal character and it is practically impossible for him to violate the laws of society. Personal purity never issues in social corruption. But this service the church is constantly rendering to the state. Now if the state sees fit to recognize the service and requite it to the extent of a few paltry tax receipts I see nothing wrong in this. Indeed, I am disposed to commend the wisdom of the expenditure, as compared with investments usually made in burly policemen who keep the peace by brute force. This principle must not be abused, however. Four errors are likely to be committed concerning it.

1. It may be supposed that the church is under some obligation to render service to the state. It is under no such obligation. It is not a police force. The church is under obligation to God, not to the state.

2. It may be supposed that taxes on church property should be remitted because the church is a religious institution. This is a mistake. Religion and morality are not synonymous terms. Unfortunately some religious systems are exceedingly defective in morals. If a certain religion (Mormonism, for instance) makes bad citizens it ought to be suppressed by the state.

3. A third error is to base exemption from taxation upon the fact that the church is a charitable institution. Now "sweet charity" is certainly a beautiful trait of the human

heart, a fragrant flower of Christian civilization. And yet, however beautiful and fragrant, it may be misdirected, its florescence excessive. Edward Denison was dwelling on this possibility when he exclaimed, "Charity is a frightful evil." One may not go so far. And yet I am of the opinion that a man who systematically, persistently, and incorrigibly banquets tramps should be punished for it. Certainly his taxes ought not to be remitted. And the same principle holds concerning charitable institutions. Churches, schools, asylums, hospitals, and the like may properly be exempt because they are unmistakably helping the state—doing what the state would otherwise have to do—but not simply because they are charitable institutions. It is always competent for the state to inquire as to the ultimate results upon good citizenship of the charity dispensed.

4. A fourth error is to hold that all church property must be exempt from taxation. A church may engage in secular pursuits. Any part of its property so used and not evidently rendering special service to the state should be put upon the tax duplicates. Delicate questions may arise in the application of this principle, but the principle itself is clear enough.

III. Should the Bible be read in schools supported by the state? This question involves the whole question of education as related to the state. Is the state responsible for the education of its citizens? I answer unhesitatingly in the affirmative. Considerations tending to establish this answer are briefly as follows: (1) Education is necessary to good citizenship. I have said that the chief purpose of the state is to protect its citizens. This means simply to keep every citizen from intruding upon the rights of every other citizen. But manifestly the first requisite to this result is, that every citizen be instructed as to his rights and their limitation. Without such instruction the work of regulation can never be successful. Political wisdom is not instinctive. (2) As civilization advances this work of protection diminishes, but the necessity for education never ceases. Indeed, the complications of advancing civilization serve only to increase it. Civilization marks a development of human powers, but likewise a multiplication of human wants. And this affects

the state quite as much as the citizen. The simple duties of a vassal to his lord can be understood without much education. Not so with the complicated duties of a sovereign American citizen to the complex government of which he forms a part. (3) It does not follow that the state must actually educate its citizens. All it need do is to see that in some way they are properly educated. If parents, public-minded citizens, corporations, or religious bodies are disposed to engage in this work, they may rightly do so. To the extent in which they do this they relieve the state of the duty of education. But no one can ever relieve the state of its obligation to oversee the work of education, by whomsoever carried on, and to secure to all its citizens at least so much instruction as may be needful for citizenship. If all else fail, the state must do the work itself. (4) All education is actually carried on in the name of the state. Every college and every university holds its property, carries on its work, and confers its scholastic honors in the name and by the authority of the state. If it should teach treasonable or other doctrine dangerous to the state its charter would be annulled and its right to instruct taken away.

Professor Hoffman and other recent writers have revived the doctrine of Plato and the Greeks that the parent even has no right to educate his own child. This view is extreme. The parent has a natural right to teach his child, which belongs to himself and not to the state. But if in exercising this right he teach things subversive of loyalty or public morals, then, and only then, the state can interfere. This does not mean, however, that defects in parental instruction may not be supplied by the state, and that by force if need be.

And now, to return to the original question, has the state a right to include in its scheme of education the reading of the Bible in its public schools? The answer naturally divides itself as follows:

1. It has no right to require the reading of the Bible. That is, it must not force the Bible upon its citizens contrary to their convictions of right. All such compulsion is evidently a violation of religious liberty. Just as much so as it would be to compel

citizens to listen statedly, against their will, to the reading of the Vedas, the Zend-Avesta, or the Book of Mormon.

2. It has a right to permit the reading of the Bible. This must be done if at all in such way as not to be tantamount to compulsion. Such time must be chosen for the reading as will make it possible for those to be absent who do not wish to hear. And the presence of persons conscientiously opposed to hearing should never be required.

3. The reason for this permission I find in the fact that the Bible is a text-book of morals. True it is likewise a religious book. But I am of the opinion that with the majority of men the strictest public morality cannot be maintained without the superior sanctions of religion. The Vedas and the Zend-Avesta in the East, the Eddas in Norseland, the Hermitic books in ancient Egypt, and the Prayers of Hurakan in Central America are among the non-Christian illustrations of this truth. Lecky has rightly said that "all religions governing mankind have done so by speaking to the heart." Simple knowledge of duty is not enough.

4. But when the Bible is read solely as a religious book, for spiritual instruction and devotion alone, the case is altogether different. I believe that no teacher employed and paid by the state has any right to take any part of the time for which he is so paid either to give religious instruction or to inculcate religious sentiment. He may hold distinctively religious exercises in his school, if objection is not made, if he acts as a private citizen and not as an agent of the state, if the exercise is strictly voluntary, and if the time thus occupied is not that prescribed by the state for the official instruction of its youth.

5. Suppose that for any reason the people of the United States should abandon the Christian standard of morals and adopt the code of Buddha, of Islam, or of Joseph Smith. Suppose, for instance, that Gibbon's learned opinions, Ingersoll's eloquent periods, Arnold's *Light of Asia*, or Max Müller's beautiful but doubtful translation of the Yajur Veda should revolutionize the public morals of this country and make Brahmins of us all. Then the Vedas ought to take the place now held by the

Bible as the text-book of the moral code. Then, if any religious book were read in the schools of the state that book should be the Veda. I have made this supposition in order to emphasize the remark that as things now are a Brahmin citizen of this Christian state should be accorded all the rights and privileges which under conditions just supposed I myself might ask as a lone representative of the Christian faith in a nation of Brahmins.

6. The principle of state control over education must not be misunderstood or perverted. Such control extends only so far as that education is concerned which is necessary for the citizen as such. The state may say that every child shall be educated to this extent. But it may not restrict education within these narrow limits of political requirement. Every child is an immortality as well as a prospective citizen. His spiritual personality is immeasurably more important than his citizenship. The one is superficial, involving but a limited earthly existence. The other is central, determining the illimitable expanses of the eternal life. That type of education which simply prepares for citizenship is therefore at best an incomplete thing. Indeed, it is fatally defective. The spiritual development of the child is the essential thing. All else is incidental.

Let no one complain, however, because state education leaves out this essential. The state must leave it out. Because it is so essential, so vital, it cannot be safely entrusted to the state. Physical force must not touch the soul. Violation of this principle has cost Christendom thousands of innocent lives and ages of retarded progress. Let it no longer be violated. This country stands for absolute religious liberty in the world, and can afford to abide by its principles, let who will object.

IV. Should the state make appropriations to denominational schools? This question has been seldom discussed in this country. Not many cases have arisen in which it has been brought to a practical issue. Doubtless many intelligent citizens have not thought far into it. Some have thought that it has no depths into which to look. And yet it is neither an empty question nor a dead issue. Within a few years past it has arrested



public attention as never before. The last Congress of the United States gave many hours to its discussion.

Before approaching the main question here involved, the relation of the state to the denominational schools in general must be briefly referred to. Conditions governing this relation are the following: (1) As a matter of fact these schools exist either by special charter from the state or under general law equivalent thereto. (2) The state does not attempt to manage the school thus chartered, to supervise its action, to exact reports, or in any way to secure the maintenance of its chartered rights and duties. Complete confidence is reposed in its promptness and political honor. (3) It is taken for granted that the school may do some things which the state may not do. Indeed, the *raison d'être* of the school is found in this fact. Notably, the school may teach certain religious doctrines in which its founders are specially interested and for which the state is not at all responsible. (4) It is expressly or tacitly understood that the school is neither to teach doctrines inimical to the state, nor to violate the stipulations of its charter. Upon these conditions the school takes its place as a legal entity in society, henceforth to be treated, both by the state and by individuals, very much as any citizen would be treated under similar circumstances. (5) It will be readily seen that such a school sustains two distinct relations, one to the state, the other to the religious denomination by which it is controlled. Now, since every relation involves a corresponding duty, and duties cannot conflict, it follows that obligations growing out of these distinct relations must be both distinct and self-consistent.

Applying these facts to the question before us, we notice:

1. The state has no right to make appropriations for the general support of such a school. If it does, the state thereupon becomes responsible for all that the school does. If you pay me for doing a certain deed, or bear my expenses in the doing of it, you are in the same position morally as though you did the deed yourself. *Qui facit per alium, facit per se*. Now, since the differential characteristic of a denominational school is its avowed attachment to certain religious beliefs and practices, and

since the state has no right to recognize or encourage any religious matter whatever, it is manifest that such portion of the work of the school as relates in any way to religion is entirely beyond the prerogative of the state. But any general appropriation is applicable to the entire work of the school. Hence some part of the state's money has been paid for teaching religion. This is a clear case of the misappropriation of public funds.

2. As to specific appropriations for stipulated uses, there may be a variety of cases. (1) The state may bargain for a legitimate service which the school may legitimately perform. For example, the instruction of an Indian youth in such things, and such only, as the state can properly require, provided the school were at liberty to give such instruction and such only, and upon special agreement to that effect, would be quite as legitimate as for the state to employ a private citizen for the same service. (2) There may be legitimate service which the school could not legitimately engage to do. For instance, if a given school is bound by relations to its denomination to give certain religious instruction to all its students, then such a school could not withhold this instruction from wards of the state. (3) Paradoxical as it may seem, a school might legitimately do illegitimate service. This would be the case if the government should employ a denominational school to teach the wards of the state, just as its other students are taught, without any restrictions whatever. Such a bargain the school might legitimately carry out, provided it had no convictions to the contrary. But the government has no right to make such a bargain. (4) In the absence of all restrictions or stipulations as to the subject-matter of instruction, it may safely be taken for granted that the bargain is illegitimate. One party to such a contract is certainly wrong; both are probably wrong.

Now, if these principles are applied and strictly enforced, there can be no sort of objection to the state's employing denominational schools to teach its Indian wards. But I hope not to be judged too severely when I express my decided conviction that in all such contracts the chances are far more than

ten to one against the honest application of these principles. Strictly conscientious schools are unwilling to take such contracts. All others are certainly disqualified.

V. I pass to another question involved in the ethics of the state. Should officers of state and witnesses at court be required to take an oath before entering upon their respective duties?

When President Cleveland said, "A public office is a public trust," he uttered no new truth. He simply put into attractive and portable form a very ancient doctrine. Plato held that officers of state have two duties, (1) to make the interest of the citizens their great aim; (2) to take care of the whole body of the republic. It has always seemed proper that officers, when about to assume such grave duties, should give some public assurances as to their convictions and purposes in the case. This expectation has assumed two forms, pledges before election, and oaths of office after election. The history of the civil oath is a long one. The oath itself is based upon the theory that a man who will not naturally tell the truth will become truthful by first calling God to witness what he is about to say, and imprecating eternal vengeance upon his soul in case he should falsify. Or, in case of an officer, that he will be made honest and faithful by means of such solemn preliminary exercises.

Concerning the oath and this theory of it the following may be said:

1. It is only the lowest type of man that can be influenced by such considerations. Any respectably intelligent man knows that all he says and does is in the presence of the Almighty, and under the constant scrutiny of his omniscient eye. He likewise knows that God will punish iniquity neither less nor more because the sinner asks him to. This, of course, in case the citizen testifying or officiating believes in God at all. But in case he does not believe in God the oath has no effect whatever, unless it be to disgust him.

2. The oath as usually administered, by a bad man or at best in a rapid, perfunctory, irreverent manner, has no moral significance whatever. Indeed, it is little short of a blasphemy.

3. In the case of an atheist who is conscientious—and there are some such—the oath becomes an iniquity. Either it requires him to assume a belief in God which he has not, and so to tell an untruth in the forlorn attempt to prove himself true and faithful, or else it debars him, on purely religious grounds, from certain rights of citizenship. Either of these results is both iniquitous and calamitous.

The repeated exclusion of Mr. Bradlaugh from the British parliament simply because he could not conscientiously recognize God in the customary oath of office is a standing reproach against Christian England, in this advanced age of enlightenment, toleration, and religious liberty. Whatever good purpose the civil oath may have served in the past, its day of usefulness is evidently done, and no Christian nation ought any longer to require it.

4. There is another matter closely associated with the civil oath which demands a passing notice. I refer to perjury and the penalties enacted for its punishment. The connection between perjury and the oath is inveterate, and yet it is neither essential nor vital. Indeed, it is merely incidental. The oath is religious in origin and character. Perjury laws are secular. The oath appeals to eternity and the sanctions of the higher life. Perjury laws appeal to time and the sanctions of the earthly life. The former appeal is closed against the state. The latter appeal is open to the state. Historically the two have been connected, as the term "perjury" suggests. But it need not have been so. If a man falsifies at court it is evidently proper to punish him for it. If an officer of state betrays the trust reposed in him as such it is right to impeach him, or to visit other pains and penalties upon him, for malfeasance of trust. No reasonable objection can be brought against existing penalties attached to the violation of an oath. The objection is, that they are attached to so unreasonable and foolish a thing as a civil oath. They are in bad company. In themselves they are just. But they ought to be exacted for the violation of truth or of official duty, not of a needless, meaningless oath. The sole purpose is to make a man tell the truth or do his duty. This

can be accomplished as well without an oath as with it. A pledge or affirmation, as allowed in the Constitution of the United States, and as now practiced in some of the courts, meets the case exactly. Its violation entails the same penalties. It proposes political punishment for political crime. This is just and right. Best of all, it avoids the awful inconsistency of imprecating divine vengeance on a frail, fallible mortal, in case he should come short in any respect of doing his whole duty. I trust the day is not far distant when the substitution now occasionally made will become universal, and when, among all Christian nations at least, the administration of a civil oath will be known only in history. The ends of justice and liberty will be thereby promoted, and the public morals advanced.

VI. Should blasphemy be punishable by law?

This is another of those questions involving the ethical functions of the state. Blasphemy has been variously defined. In its narrow sense it means profane swearing, the taking of God's name in vain. But it likewise includes all irreverence to God by asserting attributes contrary to his nature, by denying attributes essential to him, or by offering any reproach to his divine personality. In some Christian states the statutes against blasphemy include all malicious revilings of God, of the Christian religion, the Holy Scriptures, the established church, the virgin Mary, and the saints. In this country separation of church and state has largely reduced the content of the term "blasphemy" in its legal sense. And still many states of the Union have included much more than profanity in the crime of blasphemy as punishable by law. Recent attempts in certain states to restrain Mr. Ingersoll from lecturing within their borders, and to indict him for blasphemous utterances in his lectures, illustrate the supposed intent of the laws in such cases provided. A man need not swear profanely in order to be indictable for blasphemy.

Concerning this whole subject there are several undeniable statements to be made.

1. Blasphemy is a most inexcusable sin. Every man must either believe in God or not believe in him. If he does not

believe in God why should he be constantly swearing in his name? Such a practice is a piece of unmeaning folly, to say the least of it. But, to say more of it, if one knows the practice to be offensive to his fellow citizens, it then becomes a piece of ill breeding, an inexcusable effrontery. I never yet knew a man to swear from a sense of duty.

But to the one who does believe in God the sin of blasphemy is all the greater. It is simply unaccountable that a man who really believes in an infinite, all-wise, all-holy God should have any disposition either to think lightly of his being or to speak lightly of his name. It is hard for me to respect either the intelligence or the moral sense of a consciously blasphemous man.

2. My second statement is that the state has no right to punish sin. God alone can do that. There are certain sins which the state may punish, but not because they are sins. All sin is disloyalty to God and all disloyalty to God is sin. But some sins, in addition to this essential quality, are likewise incidentally injurious to men. These sins, within limits, the state may punish. But I repeat not because they are sinful, but solely because they are injurious to men. A man may be a horrible sinner against God and his fellow-men may never know it. But even if they do know it, if he takes pains to parade it before them and to glory in it, they have still no right to punish him for it. The relations of every soul to his Maker must be forever held inviolable by the hand of human law.

3. If these principles be correct it follows that the state has no right to punish blasphemy. If it can do this then it can likewise punish every other sin against God. Furthermore, the right to punish carries with it the duty to punish. And the state must act as the spiritual censor of every citizen. Religious liberty must be abolished and inquisitorial fires relighted. These conclusions may be unwelcome and somewhat startling, but they are the outcome of relentless logic and cannot be evaded. The only safe course for the state is to let the entire spiritual being of the citizen absolutely alone. If left free in this realm he may be good or he may be bad. God alone can judge him. But one

thing is certain. If not freely good he cannot be good at all. Forced goodness is not good, nor fiat virtue virtuous.

4. On the other hand, it cannot be maintained that all blasphemy must be exempt from punishment. In certain cases there may be elements connected with it which make it punishable. I mention two such possible cases. (1) What is known as vicious or malicious swearing. This form is symptomatic. It indicates something. It shows that its perpetrator is angry and in all probability is such a one as is about to break the peace. He can therefore be righteously apprehended for it, just as a citizen who threatens another can be bound over to keep the peace. Notice, however, that the basis of action in this case is found not in the actual relation of the prisoner's words to God, but in their prospective relation to man. Any other words indicating the same condition of mind might bring the same interference by the state. Manifestly, an injurer of society cannot be released from punishment simply because he is likewise a reviler of God. (2) The second case is that of habitual, profuse, indiscriminate, excessive profanity. This practice is offensive to good citizens and demoralizing to society. It is not punishable on this account, however. Good citizens are sometimes very unreasonably offended. Even truth and right may offend them. Forty years ago abolition agitators offended many such citizens, but they ought not to have been indicted for it. Neither can every tendency to demoralize society entail civil punishment. Almost every sin has some such tendency. Staying away from church, criticising the choir, or announcing a personal defect in the preacher will doubtless injure the moral fibre of some weak soul attendant thereupon. And yet no one would think such indiscretions indictable. If it be right to punish at all in the case now before us, I would base such punishment on the general right to abate a nuisance. Profanity in a religious assembly is certainly abatable as a nuisance. And I am not prepared to deny that the constant interlarding of conversation, otherwise reasonably intelligible, with expressions, senseless, distracting, and aggravating to citizens in general, may possibly be abatable as a nuisance. Certainly they are not punishable simply as blasphemy.

5. All laws against blasphemy as such are relicts of a bygone age, are wrong in themselves, are practically a dead letter, and should be removed from the statute books.

Much is constantly being said and written about the peculiarities of the present age as contrasted with former ages. But I believe that there is nothing more characteristic of it than its ability to look on both sides of a disputed question. This ability is a recent acquirement of the *genus homo*. Preceding ages have been invariably marked by prejudice. But prejudice is simply a one-sided view of things, a judging too soon, before the evidence is heard. The exercise of this new and growing ability has wrought great changes in the state and the church, as well as in individual thought and action. When Philip II, of Spain, reduced the army, destroyed the navy, and prostrated the resources of his imperial domain, in the vain attempt with his matchless Armada to extirpate heresy from Europe, it was simply because he took a one-sided view of his duty as a Christian emperor. No Christian emperor of this age would take such a view. When Catholics burned Protestants, Calvinists punished Arminians, Lutherans oppressed Calvinists, and Puritans banished Baptists, it was simply because they took a one-sided view of the duty of the church toward dissenters. No such view is now taken. So late as 1838 bishops of Durham and Norwich, having in an unguarded moment subscribed for a book written by a Unitarian, were required to make humble apology for their inexcusable indiscretion. It would read like the wildest romance if such a thing were required today. Now it seems to me that the existing statutes against blasphemy have grown out of a similar one-sided view of the duty of the state toward religion. Certainly the state ought to secure religion in the free exercise of all its rights. But it ought not therefore to punish the enemies of religion. Most assuredly it ought not to punish honest dissenters from prevailing phases of religious belief. For such dissent, through all the ages, has furnished the only avenue of religious progress. If a man should say a word against the worship of the Virgin, or against some one of the long catalogue of saints, I scarcely think there is a Christian state in all Europe



today that really believes he ought to be punished for it. Neither do I think that the Christian people of this nation now really believe that Mr. Ingersoll ought to be incarcerated for speaking blasphemous words against the Bible and the God of the Bible. Now nothing is to be gained by retaining a law whose execution is neither possible nor proper.

We who believe in absolute religious liberty must have the courage to be consistent with our own convictions. Even if a man does most wantonly outrage all our most sacred feelings and beliefs, we must not turn inquisitors and persecute him for it. We have such abiding confidence in the inspired truth of God's Word and in the divine power of Jesus Christ over the human heart and life, that we ask no arm of state to avenge the friends or punish the enemies of the Cross. More than this we insist that the state be strictly neutral in all matters of religion, and that every law and act of government be consistent with such neutrality. This does not mean that we as Christians are neutral. Religious indifferentism in the church is quite as deplorable as religious intolerance in the state. That mawkish, invertebrate sentimentalism in religion which has no fixed convictions, which never thinks, which believes anything or nothing according to the latest theological or philosophical fad, without investigation or rational apprehension, is deserving of neither confidence nor respect. One-sided religious views should indeed be discarded. But men should not therefore sluggishly close their eyes and take no view at all.

The soldier with the strongest armor can calmly face the fiercest foe. So the Christian with the firmest hold on God and truth can safely challenge error in any of its forms. The state which is purest, wisest, strongest can give the greatest freedom to its citizens. So the church which is centered on the deepest truths of God can afford to be most tolerant of others. Polarity of doctrine gives fixity of purpose, solidarity of character, consistency of life. Unfortunately, of many a modern religionist it might be prophesied, as of one of old, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."

It will be observed that questions hitherto presented are all

politico-religious questions. They refer, directly or remotely, to relations of church and state. But manifestly many other questions along other lines of thought must be included in any adequate presentation of our theme, *Ethics of the State*. It would be interesting to follow these lines, had not the discussion already become so extended as to forbid even a mention of them.

In concluding this paper it may be well to sum up briefly the results of our studies as hitherto pursued. We have found: (1) that ethical law is universal, including every voluntary act of every free intelligence, whether exerted singly or in combination with other free intelligences, and that therefore acts of state are ethical in character; (2) that the citizen owes duties to the state as an ethical entity, and that among these duties are the obligations to love, to obey, to support, and to coöperate with the state; (3) that the state likewise has duties to its citizens, among which are these: to maintain its own sovereignty, to protect and improve its citizens, and to respect their rights of personality; (4) that the state should not enforce Sabbath observance, that church property need not be taxed, that the Bible may be read as a religious book in schools of the state, but should not be forced upon unwilling ears, that general appropriations by the state should never be made to denominational schools, that the civil oath should be abolished, and that blasphemy as such should not be punishable by law.

These conclusions are believed to be correct beyond the possibility of successful contradiction. They are held firmly, yet always subject to revision upon the advent of new light concerning them. This is the proper attitude toward all secondary truth. Loyalty to what we have is perfectly consistent with hospitality to what we may hereafter receive. Conviction of truth is not intellectual opacity, nor is attachment to duty moral obscurity.